

Buchanan. (Jos. R.)

MEDICAL SECTARIANISM.

AN

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE,

DELIVERED BY

✓
JOSEPH R. BUCHANAN, M.D.,

PROFESSOR OF PHYSIOLOGY AND THE INSTITUTES OF MEDICINE, IN THE
ECLECTIC MEDICAL INSTITUTE, OF CINCINNATI,

BEFORE THE

ECLECTIC MEDICAL CLASS,

IN GREENWOOD HALL, NOVEMBER 6, 1854.

CINCINNATI:

PRINTED BY G. H. LAWYER, CORNER MAIN AND FIFTH STREETS.

1854.

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MEETING OF THE STUDENTS.

At a meeting of the students of the Eclectic Medical Institute, of Cincinnati, Ohio, held in the Hall of the College Edifice, November 7th, 1854. JAMES W. F. GERRISH, of Ia., was called to the chair, and U. V. WILLIAMS, of Ky., was appointed Secretary. On motion,

Resolved, That a committee be appointed to solicit of Prof J. R. BUCHANAN, a copy of his Introductory Address, delivered before the class, in Greenwood Hall, on the Evening of Nov. 6th, for publication. And that such committee consist of one representative from each State represented in the class; when the following gentlemen were appointed on said Committee:

S. C. FREEMAN, Vermont.
C. L. FISK, Jr., Mass.
P. ARNOLDIA, Ills.
C. W. STOCKHAM, Michigan.
H. C. POTTER, Connecticut.
T. B. SMITH, Pennsylvania.
D. W. ROBINSON, Virginia.
D. A. SMITH, Georgia.
W. L. WRIGHT, Alabama.
I. LACKEY, Iowa.

JNO. N. GREEN, Ohio.
C. J. ARMSTRONG, N. Y.
ELIJAH MARTIN, N. C.
W. R. CURTIS, La.
T. P. DORA, Ky.
T. F. RUMBOLT, Mo.
Jos. B. WRIGHT, Indiana.
ED. FREEMAN, Nova Scotia,
R. O'HARRA, Canada.
W. P. M. WOLF, Tenn.

JAMES W. F. GERRISH, *Chairman*.

URBANE V. WILLIAMS, *Secretary*.

CORRESPONDENCE.

PROF. JOSEPH R. BUCHANAN,

CINCINNATI, Nov. 7th, 1854.

SIR: Believing that a general circulation of your late Introductory Address would assist in spreading far and wide, the liberal and progressive principles of Eclecticisim, in securing to it the confidence and cordial support of the votaries of Medical Reform. We, therefore, in behalf of the class, respectfully solicit a copy for publication.

Yours, respectfully,

URBANE V. WILLIAMS, *Secretary*.

CINCINNATI, OHIO, Nov. 10th.

GENTLEMEN: The Introductory Address which you have honored, by a request for publication, is herewith placed at your disposal.

In the sentiment which it embodies, you have the matured result of observation and experience, and in the approbation with which you have received it, I realize the expression of your own enlarged and liberal views, which we hope, in time, may become universal in the profession.

Very respectfully, yours,

JOSEPH R. BUCHANAN.

To

U. V. WILLIAMS, Kentucky;

S. C. FREEMAN, Vermont;

and others of the Committee.

INTRODUCTORY LECTURE.

IN the tenth year of our corporate existence under a charter from the Legislature of Ohio, we have again arrived at the annual period of Introductory Lectures--the first Monday of November --an occasion--not for the display of oratory, learning or wit—but for a systematic statement of principles and objects, duties and responsibilities—that all may understand each other correctly, and the public be rightly informed of our position and character.

GENTLEMEN :

You are upon the threshold of the medical profession. In entering this profession it is well that you should look around carefully, to see with what and with whom you are connecting yourselves, or what new social and professional relations you assume.

Upon this subject there are several widely prevalent errors of exceedingly pernicious tendency, and young men who have not reflected much upon professional relations and duties, are exceedingly liable to fall in with these common errors, to imbibe the common prejudices, to catch and repeat the cant phrases of the profession, and thus to perpetuate without reflection some of the most serious evils of the medical profession. What those evils are against which we should guard, I propose to show in this lecture.

Mankind are gregarious — they naturally organize themselves into tribes and nations—and the people of the same community are continually organizing themselves into parties, factions, sects and cliques. There are few greater hindrances to human improvement than this spirit of partisan association, and yet it is so seductive, so powerful in its influence, that few ever have the manhood really to think for themselves, and to stand out independent of party discipline. Indeed, the majority never think of it as an evil, never desire to be redeemed from its influence, and look with some suspicion upon that man whose manhood is too large and vigorous to wear a party yoke.

Hamilton, Madison and Jay, among the wisest founders of our present

form of government, deplored this influence of party spirit, and warned us against it. They showed its destructive operation in our National Congress, where members are induced to follow their party rather than their conscience, and where all measures are carried or rejected as they conform more or less to the selfish objects of the leaders of parties. Individual members of Congress may approve an important measure, but if their party has rejected it, they dare not do their duty, for fear of being persecuted by their party, and thus losing their political influence.

And while our national legislation is thus corrupted by party spirit—the people at large are demoralized by it. They are led to support any measures, and to shout for any worthless nominee put forward by intriguing leaders. I presume therefore, no one will deny that our National Politics are corrupt, and that our political party organs contain a great deal of mendacity and recrimination.

How often have we seen the disciplined hosts of parties throughout our country standing ready to ratify with enthusiasm, any nomination that might be made at Baltimore, whatever might be the character of the nominee?

History is filled with the proofs of the power with which sectarian organizations absorb the consciences of mankind, and turn them away from all true conceptions of duty. Examples abound everywhere. It was said in the vicinity of the Mormon settlement in Illinois, that when a respectable citizen was seduced into that society, he at once became absorbed in the Maelstrom of sectarianism—lost all sense of responsibility to those outside of the society, repudiated his debts, and regarded his former friends and neighbors as enemies or “Gentiles,” upon whom the society might prey at their discretion. This is the common tendency of all sectarian or party organization—it establishes a despotism within its own limits, with a steady hostility and disregard of principle in reference to all beyond its bounds.

To a great extent these same evils exist in the medical profession, corrupting its moral purity and paralyzing its capacity for improvement. So much is this the case, that when young men are about entering the profession it often happens that, instead of considering it an individual matter of their own, like preparing to be farmers, surveyors or engineers, they consider themselves recruits, about to enlist under the banner of some medical party to which they must preserve a strict allegiance. They pass through the sessions of a medical school with the feeling that they and their fellow students constitute one common body of which the faculty are the commanders, and to whom they must be as faithful as the conscript to his colors. Such a feeling is a degrading delusion. There is no such allegiance due to anybody in the profession, except what is deserved by the truth, virtue and science they possess. Nor does a consociation in study and practice with any group of individuals originate any obligations to coincide with them in opinion, or to maintain any relations to them which are not dictated by the universal principles of morals. The

idea that any one who has studied a profession is bound to unite with others who have studied the same profession, and to co-operate with the majority, however adverse the course of the majority may be to his own convictions is entirely fallacious. The majority have an undoubted right to adopt their own opinions and to combine in any honorable scheme for the promotion of their own or the public welfare, but the minority have just the same right, and the right of any single individual to follow out his own convictions, or his own schemes is as unquestionable as the right of the majority.

We glory in the assertion of individual rights and liberties against the despotic principle that majorities may enforce conformity to their opinion, either in medicine or religion. In religion we bow to the authority of God, and in medicine to that of Nature, but not to any inferior tribunals. We repudiate the authority of parties, and all the discipline by which they are kept together and kept in order.

But let us beware lest even in our efforts for freedom of sentiment we fall again into this common error. Let us beware while we are struggling against partizanship with all its blighting influences, that we do not find ourselves becoming a party with all the faults of party organization.

We may struggle for independence even until we become a party against the existence of parties, and thus perpetuate the evil, against which we are warring. Men who are laboring for any common object naturally desire to harmonize their action, by harmonizing their sentiments. It is so very convenient for all parties to be unanimous in their sentiments, that the heretical, independent thinker who spoils their unanimity, becomes exceedingly inconvenient if not positively odious to some of those from whom he is compelled to differ.

Hence, whenever a large body of men have similar views and aims, there springs up insensibly among them a prejudice against all who question the common belief. This prejudice becomes deeper and stronger until it becomes perfect intolerance, and ostracism against all who cannot agree with the majority. Thus do all religious sects tend to intolerance. Thus have they in all past times grown in their intolerance, until the persecution of heretics was accounted a virtue—until wars, judicial assassinations, and burning at the stake, became the common incidents of that religion, which its founder pronounced a system of Love to God and man.

Our great republic derived a large portion of its best blood from those who fled to escape this persecution — yet even they in many instances became themselves persecutors in turn.

In medicine we see the same tendency as in religion. The same sectarianism has sway, and the man who boldly discards the fashionable dogmas of his day is liable not to imprisonment and torture, but to professional ostracism, and unless he can sustain himself against all his associates, to professional ruin.

We are proud to say that as medical Protestants, we abhor these efforts

to sustain a medical hierarchy by crushing individual freedom. We are opposed to such discipline in all its forms, whether it is enforced by private innuendoes and understandings, by the formal action of medical societies, by the fierce denunciations of medical journals, by the prejudices instilled in medical schools, or by the pledges exacted from deluded young men, to surrender their own reason and adhere to the faith of their teachers, under penalty of forfeiting their diplomas, whenever they discover that the doctrines they have been taught are erroneous.

But while we are protesting against these papal errors in medicine, is it certain that we may not be like other protestants, become as intolerant ourselves?

Gentlemen—intolerance is one of the natural errors of mankind, and unless human nature has recently improved, we must expect to have our share of it. The very fact that we are arrayed against intolerance, may help to make us intolerant. We learn in our co-operative action to look with distrust and aversion at an intolerant party. We hear professors denouncing as unworthy of any recognition, members of the profession who give doses very different from their own—we observe that they denounce the most honorable and learned members of the profession in coarse and almost scurrilous language, if guilty of disbelieving their favorite ideas of therapeutics, and we believe that from such sources just and wise opinions are not to be obtained. We turn aside with disgust, and gradually become prejudiced against the professional bigot and his party—the prejudice may be increased perhaps by some personal wrong, of which we have a right to complain. It spreads and strengthens among our circle until we regard the more liberal minded portion of the profession, and the more conservative portion, as two distinct opposing parties with little or nothing in common, like rival nations of different races—we with our peculiar knowledge, performing our duties, and they with their stock of learning pursuing a distinct career. We thus fall into a trap for our own imprisonment, and sanction the most pernicious falsehood in medical politics. Or in the technical language of our profession, we run into a *foramen cæcum* where there are no farther progress, and no anastomosing branches to communicate with other channels. When men of conservative and dogmatic minds indulge their bigotry and hostility to reform, they assume that the more conservative portion of the profession constitutes its entire mass, and that all who do not coincide with them constitute insignificant outside parties, not really belonging to the medical profession. They give an epithet or name to such a party, and thus design it as a narrow-minded affair, a mere fragment broken from the profession—a party in which the full portions of medical science are woefully reduced. If the party thus accept a name, which assigns them a limited sphere, they consent to draw the line and build a wall between themselves and the rest of the profession. Perhaps the party may consent to the arrangement because it is a party of exclusive ideas. The pure homeopathic and pure hydropathic parties accept their designation, because they are really exclusive parties, not recognizing

the great mass of our therapeutic resources as valuable, but confining themselves to a certain range of medical treatment. They are willing to be walled out of the great area occupied by the profession, because they do not wish to occupy it. They are willing to be walled out of the profession as outsiders, because at the same time the profession at large is walled out of their exclusive territory, which they hope will become the largest and most populous enclosure.

But of such party walls and subdivisions of the professional territory *we know nothing*. We recognize but one medical science—one medical profession, consisting of the accumulations of ages, of experience and observation, all of which is valuable for example, for warning and instruction. We do not demand that the unquestionable facts of accumulated experience, shall be scoffed aside to make room for some new theory, or some single principle of treatment. We do not consider any measure judicious which results in the formation of discordant parties.

All who pursue the medical profession rightly, will find in their studies a common ground which all may cultivate in harmony.

Every physician recognizes the necessity of a thorough knowledge of anatomy, as the basis of surgery, physiology, and general practice. Every one also recognizes the value of pathology and pathological anatomy—and in these two departments all physicians alike resort to writings of the ablest anatomists and pathologists, eager to learn all they can communicate, anxious to learn still more, and ready to hail with gratitude any new writer who may enlarge the boundaries of those sciences. As anatomists and pathologists, the whole profession harmonizes like the cultivators of mathematics, natural philosophy or geology—these departments are cultivated as a noble profession, and consequently are far advanced by the gigantic labors of savans whom we all delight to honor without distinction.

In chemistry the same is true—all physicians acknowledge its importance, co-operate in its cultivation, and ignore the existence of party divisions, before the shrine of this pure science.

In physiology also the profession looks to its teachers, as in chemistry, and every step of demonstrative science anterior to the present period has been received by all alike.

In operative surgery and obstetrics too, as in physiology and chemistry, the profession has fixed scientific principles in which all may agree, and in which we are happy to be instructed by the learning, the skill and experience of our predecessors and our most gifted cotemporaries.

Thus in seven departments, medicine is a pure science, and all physicians learn from the same text-books, proceed upon the same principles, aim at the same results, and look in the same direction for progress and improvement. If this were all, medicine like all other departments of science might present harmony among its cultivators. But in the practice of the profession, different opinions are formed as to the value of particular drugs and particular measures, and hence arises the dishonorable discord of the

profession. I say dishonorable because it is contrary to correct ethics, injurious to professional progress, and therefore injurious to mankind.

If A believes that in a certain disease, calomel is the best prescription—B maintains that opinion is the best, and C prefers soda to either—is that any reason that each of these three gentlemen should angrily denounce the other two as quacks and refuse to recognize them as respectable gentlemen in the profession, when if they had only agreed with him in opinion, he would have walked arm in arm, eulogized their talents and ranked them among the best and brightest of the land?

If Dr. Smith believes that calomel in teaspoonful doses, repeated every hour, is very wholesome in cholera, and if Dr. Brown believes at the same time that the millionth part of a grain is as large a dose as ought to be given—and if Dr. Green considers brandy and pepper and hot blankets better than either, is there any sufficient reason in this that Smith and Brown and Green should fight a triangular duel over the questions between them, and that the entire profession should take sides in the quarrel?

There is one great contest in the profession at the present day which deserves to have been immortalized by the satirical pen of Dean Swift. It is the war of the *big doses* and the *little doses*. Those who administer medicine in heroic doses, and the West Americans are the leaders of the world in this respect, insist that any whose doses are as low as the thousandth or millionth of a grain must necessarily be dishonest, and however thorough their education in every department of medical science, they are loudly denounced as quacks. The *little-dose-ians* retort upon the *big-dose-ians* by declaring themselves the only true possessors of medical science, and denouncing all the principles and remedies of *big-dose-ian* practice as a farrago of absurdity and a magazine of trash. According to one party, midnight darkness rests upon those regions where the theory of Hahnemann has not yet enlightened the profession. According to the resolute of the other party, the followers of Hahnemann are wandering in outer darkness, following an *ignis fatuus* guidance or a moonlight hallucination—and eking out their system with downright imposture and fraud.

From all such contests as these, may common sense and common honesty deliver us, now and forever. Let those who will, draw dividing lines in the profession, we recognize only its unity. Let those who will, circumscribe themselves by exact boundaries, we claim free access to all that experience and science have ever taught or are now teaching. Let those who will proscribe honest but eccentric cultivators of science, we shall extend them our professional courtesy, and profit by their intelligence.

It is to be hoped, that a broad American Eclecticism, candidly recognizing all that is contributed to the healing art—neither despising nor rejecting anything which is the product of honest investigation, will ultimately harmonize medical sects and extinguish medical sectarianism. I think no one can doubt that ultimately the medical profession will outgrow this sectarian condition—that every honest cultivator of the science will be

respected, and the discoveries of each become the property of all. We cannot bring about this change at present, but we can at least announce the true principle of that American Eclecticism which in a more enlightened day will occupy this continent. And to prepare for that glorious period, let us beware of encouraging, in any way, party discord or keeping up those party boundaries which confine the intelligence or discoveries of each party to itself, instead of allowing it to flow forth and enlighten all. Whatever of good and true others may enjoy, we wish free access to it. Whatever of medical truth we may possess, is open to the world, and we wish it to go forth for the benefit of mankind.

The medical profession has a deep and permanent hostility to secret nostrums. It demands that whatever valuable medical knowledge may exist should be made accessible to the entire medical profession. But what are evils of the nostrum dealing business compared to those of medical sectarianism? At the utmost, nostrum-mongering can only conceal a few recipes, which if known would probably be but little used. But medical sectarianism conceals a large amount of highly important knowledge. The deluded followers of medical bigots and demagogues never look over the walls by which their vision is bounded. Rich libraries may be accumulated, laden with rare and valuable knowledge, and the counters of apothecaries may be covered with new and highly important medicines; but if the books have been written or the medicines prepared by the proscribed class, the books are unread and the medicines unused. Many a valued citizen, many a blooming maiden, many a leader of society, has perished in consequence of this barbarous state of the profession—died because their medical advisers were too bigoted or too deluded to look beyond their own party for knowledge—died because their physicians were wilfully ignorant of that which might have saved them. I do not hesitate to say, that in our own country tens of thousands have been immolated by medical sectarianism, and that terrible epidemics have raged with very little relief from medical science, because the true methods of relief were to be found in books against which medical sectarianism had prejudiced the physicians.

So terrible a curse has medical sectarianism been to society, I cannot recommend anything which tends to perpetuate its power. I do not consider it necessary or judicious for a physician to make frequent reference to those epithets which refer to divisions in the profession. Frequent discussions of the comparative merits of Allopathic and Homeopathic, of Old School and New School, Conservative and Progressive, Reformatory and Hunkerish parties, are not desirable, unless such discussions are made necessary by circumstances. When we are compelled by truth to differ from our professional brethren, let us discuss the matter as men of science discuss other debatable propositions, without giving the discussion that personal character which arouses partizan feeling and confirms prejudice.

The period of combative reform is passing away, to give place to a period of more quiet diffusion of scientific truth. Protestantism in religion, which was once compelled to battle stoutly for its own existence, and retort

persecution for persecution, is now sufficiently advanced and powerful to extend to Romanism a magnanimous toleration and protection. Medical Protestantism, which was once obscure, unknown and scorned, is now sufficiently known to command respect. Contests of a harsh and angry character may be necessary to protect the rights upon which a majority may be disposed to trample—but when those rights are vindicated and respected, contest should cease. I do not mean that we should slacken in our zeal for the practice and advocacy of truth, but that the question should be scientific and not personal.

A love of contest and denunciation is not the characteristic of the noblest specimens of humanity, and the man of correct feelings will rejoice when the necessity for such contests is at an end.

I would not, therefore, recommend the young physician who is fairly treated by his professional brethren, to announce himself in a defiant and challenging manner, casting suspicion and contempt upon professional rivals. Rivalry in professional practice is apt to grow embittered and personal, even with all the courtesy we can practice.

Nor is it desirable to prefix any qualification to your title of Doctor of Medicine; that title is sufficient to signify that you are properly prepared, worthy of confidence and familiar with your professional resources. That title is perfectly intelligible, but the title of Eclectic Physician is not. One will suppose it merely a new sectarian designation—another will suppose it to signify a loose and indecisive course of practice—a system composed of scraps of various doctrines, decisive in none. The physician whose doctrines bind him to an exclusive course, may well place upon his sign the word homeopathic or hydropathic; but those who do not profess to belong to sect need no such title. Our too conservative old-school brethren show their self-respect and their good sense by calling themselves simply physicians and nothing else.

If medical *sectarianism* be justly entitled to our rebuke, there is a still more offensive *ism* which is worthy of our unmitigated contempt. I allude to medical *demagoguism*. There is a class of men (fortunately there are few as yet, and if rightly condemned by public opinion their number will not increase,) whose moral and intellectual qualities do not entitle them to any honorable rank in society or in the proper and legitimate cultivation of medical science. Having no correct and elevated views of what constitutes a gentleman, a scholar or a physician, they are doomed to mediocrity and inferiority in reputation; but, unconscious of their true position, they struggle against the laws of nature to become leaders. They make a great outcry about some sectarian idea, some deformed and distorted conceptions of medical science; and although they have no learning, no originality, no eloquence nor even variety of ideas, they make up abundantly by everlasting repetition of the same story, and by scurrilous personalities against all who treat them with the contempt they deserve. They are exceedingly anxious to gain reputation by a controversy with their superiors—they issue blustering challenges which nobody notices—scurrilous

pamphlets which the parties assailed never answer—foul charges and insinuations which rest in the mud where they were born.

If they find a few congenial characters, or impose upon a few misguided youth—they prolong a petty notoriety in a petty way, and make a slight impression on a few—the most intelligent of the profession being entirely beyond their reach. But so far as any impression is made, they vulgarize and demoralize. Young men who find their professional models in the lives of truly illustrious men, may rise to eminence—but they who select for imitation a medical demagogue, will be but imperfect copies of a miserable model.

Next to sectarianism and demagogueism, let me warn you against *sciolism* or superficiality. Colleges are censured for ushering young men into the profession too rapidly—but the fault is not with them. Young men are continually engaging in the profession without collegiate assistance—and the majority of those who attend college appear eager to drop their studies and engage in practice as early as possible—as soon as they can obtain a diploma, if not sooner. Young America will not be kept back for severe and prolonged scholastic labor.

But let me here assure you that a noble edifice cannot be erected on a narrow foundation—and if you do not during your pupilage lay a broad foundation and become thorough scholars, it is not probable that you will ever be distinguished by superiority of attainments. In the busy hours of practice, there are few who make much scientific progress. The majority actually grow rusty. Now or never is the time for thorough scholarship.

The law requires but two—yet three courses of instruction are little enough to impress the truths of medical science deeply and firmly on the mind. We rejoice to know that many of our students have attended faithfully upon three courses—but if the public will sanction sciolism by employing physicians who have not even graduated—and if young men have so little self-respect as to aim at obtaining a diploma alone, without regard to qualification—if they resort to those irresponsible establishments where no regulations exist as to time of study, and where a diploma can be obtained by any ignoramus or knave, the profession must lose a great portion of its respectability with the public, and you must suffer in character unless you can make known the distinction between those who have and those who have not pursued the honorable course of study, and faithfully qualified themselves to perform their duties.

As the highlands differ from pestilential marshes, so should the sphere you occupy be elevated, pure and remote from affinity with those who degrade the profession. Choose your exemplars from those who have left behind them names that

“Were not born to die.”

1. GALEN, in the second century, whose intellect appeared to have mesmerised the mind of the entire profession, and held it in subjugation for twelve or thirteen centuries, commenced the study of medicine at 17 years of age. He resorted to what was deemed the best school then in the world

—at Alexandria—and at the age of 28 he went home to practice. Thus did he lay the foundation of a fame and a moral power which governed the profession for more than a thousand years.

2. **VESALIUS**, the renovator of anatomy in the 16th century, not only displayed great zeal as a student in his dissection of animals, but exhausted the knowledge of the schools by his studies at Louvain, at Paris, at Pisa, at Bologna, and other Italian universities.

3. **FALLOPIUS**, (the pupil of Vesalius,) whose name is perpetuated by the Fallopiian tubes, did not deem his education complete, until he had visited other schools, besides the famous one of Padua.

4. **HARVEY**, the illustrious discoverer of the circulation of the blood, who figured in the first half of the 17th century, (1578-1658,) spent four years at Cambridge and then five years on the continent, and at the principal medical school in Europe (at Padua,) before he obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine. Nine years of collegiate study laid a suitable foundation for that reputation which is greater now, after the lapse of two hundred years, than it was in his own day. Great men are seen best at a distance; to many of his cotemporaries Harvey appeared but a humbug—and men who are now entirely invisible, then seemed greater than Harvey.

He had a noble conception of the dignity of the physician, the dignity of the true scholar. He lived up to his idea, and his example is a light to succeeding centuries.

5. Sometimes, as in the cases of Malpighi, Valsalva, and Morgagni, the zealous devotion to study enabled them to win the honors of their profession at an early age. Sometimes, as in the case of **RIVERIUS** (1589-1665,) a cotemporary of Harvey, whose writings passed through numerous editions, their position was gained only by perseverance. Riverius failed in his first examination for a degree. He was rejected, but having true manhood in him, this only stimulated him to redoubled efforts, and he graduated next spring at the age of twenty-two.

6. **SYDENHAM**, (1624-1689,) sometimes called the father of English medicine, prosecuted his studies at Oxford until he became a Bachelor of Medicine, and still a few years longer before he obtained the degree of Doctor of Medicine. There was a time when that degree was a high prize, beyond the reach often of men who were well educated and proficient in science and practice. How much has its value degenerated in our country, and how busy at this time are medical demagogues in reducing its character still lower?

7. **BOERHAAVE**, (1668-1733) the most eminent physician of his age, was also a most faithful student, and his attainments were so diversified and extensive that he was called the Voltaire of Science.

8. **BARON VAN SWIETEN**, (1700-1772,) the most distinguished follower of Boerhaave, and author of the celebrated commentaries on the aphorisms of Boerhaave, spent seven years in pupilage before he took his degree.

9. **MALPIGHI**, the anatomist, (1628-1694) whose name is perpetuated by the Malpighian bodies, obtained great honor by his proficiency as a student,

yet was 25 years of age before he obtained his degree, three years after which he became professor at Bologna.

10. VALSALVA, (1666-1723,) the distinguished anatomist and surgeon, studied under Malpighi and took his degree at 21 years of age, but he applied himself with such zeal as to impair his health.

11. MORGAGNI, a contemporary of Boerhaave, the greatest anatomist of his time, (1682-1772) studied under Valsalva — Valsalva under Malpighi — all three eminent as anatomists—all intense students—all distinguished in their pupilage, and early called to professorships.

12. ALEXANDER MONRO, (1697—1767) the celebrated anatomist and founder of the school at Edinburgh, was well prepared for his subsequent career by studies in London under Cheselden, in Paris and at Leyden, under Boerhaave.

13. CULLEN, (in the middle of the 18th century,) a standard authority with the last generation of physicians, prepared himself too by the old laborious course which has gone out of fashion here. He served his time regularly with a surgeon and apothecary at Glasgow.

14. The HUNTERS, whose career occupied the latter half of the eighteenth century, were men of the same stamp—men who prepared for their great duties in a manner worthy of a great undertaking. WILLIAM HUNTER (1718-1783) spent three years with the famous Dr. Cullen. It was ten years after this before he received the degree of Doctor of Medicine from Glasgow—having in the mean time been occupied in study and in lecturing on anatomy and surgery and in surgical practice.

JOHN HUNTER, (1728-1793,) though deficient in his early education, spent seven years in faithful study with his brother—but in fact his whole professional life was a life of intense study.

The men destined for eminence have generally been distinguished early by their indefatigable energy as students. Many have exhausted the educational facilities of their own country, and then gone abroad to obtain the advantages of the most celebrated schools in foreign countries. I commend their example to your imitation:

But it was not upon colleges alone that they relied—they continued through life laborious students. The founders of the most flourishing school west of the mountains, the learned Prof. Caldwell was a laborious student and writer up to his latest breath—upwards of eighty years of age—and in the prime of early manhood in Philadelphia, he labored mentally for eighteen hours out of the twenty-four.

My former friend, the late Prof. Harrison, (I regret that medical politics should ever have separated us,) assured me many years since, that ever since his medical pupilage, he had devoted regularly as much as five hours a day to study and reading.

But alas! how many practising physicians are there who shamefully neglect the daily study of their profession. How wicked—how inexcusable their conduct is you may judge from this fact. It requires all the time of one Professor to master the knowledge necessary to teach properly one

department of medical science—and if one seventh of our entire science is enough for one man's labor, it is surely impossible for any practising physician with all his study, to master thoroughly every department of the science. It requires all his energies to master that which is practically important and *necessary*—and if he fails or falls short in study, he certainly loses much, and his patients bear the loss. The physician who does not study is a defaulter to the public, no better in principle than the absconding banker.

There is much more that I could say upon these topics, but perhaps some one more accustomed to the cant words of party may ask, "what after all is the difference between your school and others. If you, like them, recommend prolonged and profound study of the same departments and the same authors, with the same high-toned, moral and professional principles, where is the difference?"

I shall not now undertake to state this difference for both parties. Others may define their own position. We would define ours, and leave you to judge, what is the difference.

We hold that in the medical profession as in all matters of opinion—as in politics, religion, and business—there are two parties or at least two opposite tendencies, upon which parties may be based. They are commonly known as Conservative and Progressive, Hunkerish and Reformatory,—or in more familiar slang phrase as Holdfast and Go-ahead, or Old Foggy and Young America.

There always has been, and there always will be a progressive party—and this progressive party will increase as the world increases in science and intellectual life and liberty until it constitutes the ruling power. The American Republic is the representative of this progressive tendency.—Russia, China, and Africa represent the despotic conservatism or Hunkerish tendency. They considerably outnumber us at present, but we have the most comfortable certainty that our principles will triumph over all odds. And as the American republic compares with the medical despotisms, so do the progressive American reformers in medicine wish to compare with the opponents of reform. We wish to see progressive Americanism in medicine substituted for the conservative customs of European kingdoms, and we have undoubting confidence that it will be done—for revolution is the order of Nature.

For the first fourteen centuries of the Christian era, the darkest Chinese Hunkerism ruled the profession of medicine. For twelve or thirteen centuries the voluminous, wordy and fanciful writings of Galen—(now obsolete) were the absolute law of all—the boundaries of his writings were considered the limits of human knowledge in medicine. Only about four centuries and a half, has the human mind been emancipated from slavery—not fully emancipated to American freedom, but to the limited freedom which exists, where the despotism of one man is substituted by the weight of authority derived from a greater number.

In this imperfect freedom, what has been done by the progressive party, against conservative resistance?

The friends of progress have battled for, and successively established:

The doctrine of the circulation of the blood;

The doctrine of a multiplicity of organs in the brain;

The practice of inoculation—superseded by

The practice of vaccination;

The use of cold water in fever;

The treatment of scurvy, by acids and vegetables;

The use of quinine in fever;

The treatment of Insanity, by anodyne tonic and restorative measures;

The use of ether and chloroform, as anæsthetics;

The necessity of ventilation, by scientific methods of changing the air of apartments.

The necessity of sanitary regulations by government to protect the health of the people.

We might name many other improvements that have gained a firm establishment against a resolute opposition, and it would be interesting to review the battles of the conservatives and progressives over each of these propositions, but many of these stories are already familiar, as standing illustrations of medical bigotry.

The progressive party are still struggling for the following improvements, which are not yet entirely established, but are in hopeful progress:

1. The treatment of consumption by nutrient, tonic, invigorating regimen—by nourishment, iron, salt, sorbefacients and exercise, instead of depletion and confinement.

2. The treatment of cholera, by a simple stimulant, and alterative and anti-spasmodic course, which is successful with 95 per cent.

3. The preservation of the vital powers of the patient, and especially of his blood against the lancet and all destructive anæmating modes of treatment.

4. The curability by improved treatment of cancerous diseases, and of a large number of forms of disease in which it has been the fashion to indulge in a gloomy prognosis.

5. The truth of the general principles of Phrenology.

6. The existence of extraordinary phenomena in the human constitution not yet fully understood, which are displayed in mesmeric experiments.

7. The improvement of the *Materia Medica* by a more careful attention to botany, by the preparation and use of a large number of new and valuable remedies, and the progressive disuse of the older agents for which they have been substituted.

It is evident that in proportion as improved agents are introduced, the articles for which they are substituted are gradually disused and laid aside. Hence we find many articles less necessary than they were formerly considered—a number are very seldom used, and some may be regarded as entirely obsolete. Among those who have obtained a respectable knowledge

of our new resources, there are very few who find any occasion to continue to use the preparations of mercury, arsenic, lead, antimony and copper in the treatment of any form of disease. Throughout the entire profession there is a great abatement in the use of mercurials, and the only reason why they are not with all nearly obsolete, is that the new resources of the *materia medica* are not yet sufficiently known to all.

In advocating these, and other improvements in the profession, find we some three or four thousand American physicians substantially agreeing with us—perhaps these are all who coincide in all the improvements mentioned, but there are a vast number who agree with us in one or more of the improvements named, indeed the majority of this entire profession are in sympathy with us in reference to some portion of our improvements—and the entire profession are really drifting in the direction of our position. For we have not gone off in any by-path, to be lost by the way-side; if we are in any degree separated from the majority, it is not by any eccentricity of ours, but only by pursuing boldly the path of improvement in the straight forward line of progress until there is a long space between the front ranks of our advanced position, and the rear ranks of the great caravan behind. But all the way along our march the “Vanguard of the Army” is connected with the rear-guard by different corps, which are nearer to us or nearer to the rear-guard, as they have been more active, and progressive or more tardy.

The movement of the entire body is in one direction, and if we should this day sit down and fold our arms without farther progress, some of us might possibly live to witness the arrival of the rear-guard at our present position. For the members of the profession are doing partially and slowly what we have done thoroughly and promptly—they are slowly diminishing the use of mercurials—slowly diminishing the use of the lancet—slowly improving in the treatment of cholera, consumption, and a host of other diseases—increasing in their disposition to respect and preserve the vital powers of patients—enlarging their conceptions of physiology, and of the powers of the nervous system, giving more attention to botany, adopting our new remedies, and acquiring increased confidence in the possibility of curing diseases.

Thus are we all (all who have not turned off into by-paths) tending to one common goal—there are many however who have not kept pace with our advancement in therapeutics and physiology—but permit me to remark, that all who have advanced with us, have found themselves on the right road, and experience has only given them certainty and enthusiasm. Therefore are we authorized to say that we are not sectarians, but true progressives in science, teaching to-day what the entire profession will ratify in the future.



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PAID

John W. Taylor, Jr.

St. Louis, Missouri

Dec 10